

NEWS RELEASE

**OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS**

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For Immediate Release

JUNE 12, 2006

Randy G. Massey, Acting United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, announced today that **EDDIE GORMAN**, 64, of Memphis, Tennessee, having pled guilty to wire fraud, odometer tampering, and false odometer statement, was sentenced to three years' probation, a fine of \$3,000, a special assessment of \$300 and full restitution to Steve Schmitt Motors in Greenville, IL and Daimler-Chrysler Corporation. **EDDIE GORMAN** is one of nineteen individuals from Memphis, Tennessee, who were also charged with wire fraud or mail fraud in the Southern District of Illinois, with having engaged in trading vehicles with false odometer readings. **Johnnie Martin Costello**, 39; **Tommy Gerard Costello**, 47; **Johnnie J. Gorman**, 39; **Joseph Gerard Gorman**, 38; **John Webb**, 48; **James Boswell**, 50; **Mary Boswell**, 52; **William Carroll**, 45; **Ed Costello**, 48; **Harry Joseph Costello**, 43; **James Costello**, 60; **Jim J Costello**, 50; **Pat G. Costello**, 47; **Pat J. Costello**, 36; **Johnny McNally**, 36; **Tom G. Riley**, 37; **Jackie Costello**, 55 and **Wilson Costello**, 52, have each pled to the offenses charged and are scheduled for sentencing at various times over the next four months. These crimes took place in October and November, 2003, in Monroe, Bond, and Lawrence Counties, Illinois. The defendants were traveling self employed painters who lived in a community known as Irish Travelers. In addition to the nineteen arrests, seventeen pickup trucks with a total appraised value of \$278,525 were seized from the defendants and are being processed for forfeiture.

These defendants were each separately charged in a scheme which involved buying a new vehicle by trading a vehicle on which the odometer had been disconnected. The defendants' schemes involved approximately twenty vehicles in Illinois, with an average loss of more than \$10,000 per vehicle. Additional vehicles were traded in Indiana, Iowa, Nebraska, Texas and Tennessee, with total losses to car dealerships in all states, from all of the defendants' conduct, in excess of \$413,000. The victimized car dealerships in Illinois included Steve Schmitt Motors in Greenville, IL; Metro Chrysler in Columbia, IL; and Westport Chrysler in Lawrenceville, IL. Investigators pointed out that, as these dealerships learned of the scam, they were quick to notify and make whole those customers who had purchased the tampered vehicles from each dealership.

Information for the indictments was obtained in an investigation led by the United States Postal Inspection Service, which was assisted by the Illinois Secretary of State Police, and the National Insurance Crime Bureau. The cases are being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Michael J. Quinley and Michael Thompson.